

of certain facilities.

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** Thank you. Senator Coordsen, please, followed by Senators Dierks and Withem.

**SENATOR COORDSEN:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I think that this amendment is a critical thing for us to do today in restoring the original language to the statute. Interesting comment from Senator Johnson a few seconds ago, I have sat here the past several months and saw the fingers waved at us, and saw and heard the rhetoric of economic development, and economic development, and how great the services are provided in the urban areas. Perhaps this is the time to talk just a little bit about the importance of the services provided by the various divisions of IANR. You know 80 percent, according to the most recent figures, of all of the manufacturing in Nebraska is ag related. The cash sales of agriculture, the cash sales only, from 7 to 10 billion dollars. Twenty-five percent of our employment across the state, urban and rural alike, is in agriculture. We talk about the progresses we are having, the new inventions, the new devices, the biotechnology. Much of this, my friends, that is bringing us into the future has been developed at the ag schools in the research division, in training the people who go into the private industry, and provide the expertise to develop the new products. I think that it is essential, not for rural Nebraska, but for Nebraska, that we ensure that the Board of Regents are directed to maintain the educational opportunities that are so necessary if we are going to even maintain the economic problems that we have. I urge your adoption of the amendment with the largest of possible margins. Thank you.

**SPEAKER BARRETT:** Thank you. The gentleman from Ewing, Senator Dierks.

**SENATOR DIERKS:** Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I am sorry you took me by surprise. I, too, support the amendment of Senator Rod Johnson and Senator Schmit. I think that again we are dealing with a subject very close to the heart. I think that we need to be sure that we are expressing our confidence again in agriculture in Nebraska, and this is a very poignant way for us to do that. We have the opportunity today to tell people across Nebraska, here we are. We support your activities, and this is just one of those methods we have today to do that. I urge your support of the amendment. Thank you.